血風の彼方で
柳生十兵衛死す
伍
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YAGYU JUBEI DIES (V)

BEYOND THE BLOODWINDS

CONTENTS

PART THE TWELFTH: BEYOND THE BLOODWINDS

THEY'RE COMMON BURGLARS! KILL 'EM!
EEP!!
I'M LORD ODA NOBUNAGA'S NUMBER ONE RETAINER, KINOSHITA TOKICHIRO!
FALL BACK!

RUN? AND WHERE AM I SUPPOSED TO RUN TO!?
AHAH!
RUN FOR IT!!
THAT WON'T WORK, TOKICHIRO!
IF I KNEW IT WAS GONNA END UP LIKE THIS, I WOULD'VE STAYED A FARMER!
WAA AAA AAH!
OOH... IS KINOSHITA TOKICHIRO ABOUT TO MEET HIS END IN THIS CASTLE, WITHOUT EVER GETTING HIS DAY AT THE TOP!?
RUFFIANS WHO PROFANE OF ODA, PREPARE TO DIE!

WH... WHAT ON EARTH!?
OHHH HHH!!

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RESTRAIN YOURSELF, YAGYU JUBEI
YOU ARE IN THE PRESENCE OF LORD MATSUDAIRA MOTOYASU, HEAD OF THE MATSUDAIRA CLAN!
SO RESTRAIN YOURSELF, JUBEI!
IN OTHER WORDS, THE FUTURE SHOGUN, TOKUGAWA IEYASU!

NO. ACTUALLY...
YOU'D GOT TO BE KIDDING. THERE ARE TWO MOTOYASUS HERE.
ONE MUST BE THE SHINOBI KAGEMARO OF IGA!
THEY'RE LIKELY BOTH DOUBLES!
I'LL JUST CUT THEM BOTH DOWN!
I'VE GOT NO INTENTION OF BOWING AND SCRAPING TO SHADOWS!
THEY ARE BOTH MATSUDAIRA MOTOYASU... NO... TOKUGAWA IEYASU...
STILL HAVEN'T REALIZED IT, JUBEI?

TIME HAS PLAYED QUITE A TRICK ON THIS ERA.
THAT IS CORRECT...

TOKUGAWA IEYASU... IS A TWIN!

WHA...
ARE YOU GOING TO SAY THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE?
WHAA AAAA AAT!?
THINK WHY YOU CAME TO THIS ERA!
USE YOUR BRAIN, JUBEI!

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF MATSUDAIRA MOTOYASU — NO, TOKUGAWA IEYASU — BEING A TWIN!
YOU MEAN THIS IS WHERE THE TWO EDO PERIODS SPLIT?
THERE'S NO RECORD OF LORD IEYASU BEING A TWIN!
NO, NOR IN ANY ERA AFTER THIS!
NOT IN MY ERA—
THE HISTORY OF THE TWO LORD IEYASUS BEGINS AND ENDS IN DARKNESS
OF COURSE YOU HAVEN'T.
I BELIEVE THIS IS TRUE IN YOUR ERA AS WEL.
TWINS ARE CONSIDERED ILL OMENS

IN THIS ERA OF WARRING STATES,
TWINS ARE EVEN MORE REVILED AS AN EVIL THAT RUINS FAMILIES!
IN THIS WORLD OF VASSALS SUPPLANTING LORDS, EVEN BLOOD BROTHERS MUST FIGHT!
WHEN THEY ARE BOTH SUCCESSORS, EVEN MORE SO! IT'S LIKE EMBRACING THE LIVE COALS OF INTERNAL STRIFE!
WHEN TWINS ARE BORN INTO THE HOUSEHOLD OF ANY MILITARY LEADER,
THEY ARE EITHER KILLED,
OR ABANDONED IN THE MOUNTAINS TO DIE.
THAT IS THE WAY OF THE WORLD!

BY CUSTOM, ONE OF THE TWO OUGHT TO HAVE DIED!
AS A TWIN!
THIS IS THE WORLD IN WHICH LORD MOTOYASU WAS BORN HEIR TO THE MATSUDAIRA CLAN.
HE COULD NEVER TAKE THE LIVES OF HIS DEAR CHILDREN!
BUT THEIR ESTEEMED FATHER, LORD MATSUDAIRA HIROTADA, WAS A GENTLE MAN AT HEART.
I AM CALLED KYOAMI, A NOH PLAYER OF IGA
IT WAS T HEN THAT I RECEIVED LORD HIROTADA'S SUMMONS AND CAME TO OKA-ZAKI CASTLE
IGA-

AND WHAT ADVICE DID A NOH PLAYER HAVE FOR THE MATSUDAIRA?
ZEAMI, WHO PERFECTED THE ART, WAS A MAN OF IGA.
IGA IS NOH'S HOME-LAND
LORD HIROTADA MERELY ORDERED ME TO TAKE CHARGE OF ONE OF THE TWINS.
ADVICE? HOW SCANDAL-OUS
I WAS CHARGED WITH RAISING HIM TO FULL ADULTHOOD.

I MAY SAY THAT IT WAS THANKS TO THE EXISTENCE OF TWO LORD MOTOYASUS
THAT THE MATSUDAIRA WERE ABLE TO SURVIVE THOUGH WEAK AND SURROUNDED ON ALL SIDES BY POWERFUL STATES.
AT TIMES LORD MOTOYASU THE STRATEGIST PROTECTED HIS HOME,
AND AT TIMES CHANGED PLACES WITH LORD MOTOYASU THE SHINOBI!
THIS WAS THE WILL OF THEIR ESTEEMED FATHER, LORD HIROTADA
HE DESIRED TO PRESERVE THE MATSUDAIRA CLAN AT ANY COST
TAKE MY STORY AS YOU WILL, YAGYU JUBEI
BUT DO NOT FORGET THAT YOUR ACTIONS WILL ALTER THE WORLD TO COME!